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AUTHOR	Adams, Marlene E.
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ABSTRACT

Developed as a quinmester unit for the high school on yearbook and magazine layout, this guide provides the teacher with suggested teaching strategies for a study of the theory and practice of page layout, photo cropping and editing, use of color and special effects, copy fitting and headline writing and fitting, and principles of typography. Current magazines are studied for trends in layout, and methods of adapting magazine layout to school publications are developed. Also provided are opportunities for practice in using these skills, terms, and procedures. The guide is arranged by performance objectives with the teaching strategies listed under each objective. Appended is a list of student and teacher resources including textbooks, magazines useful for studying layout and typography, and yearbook printing companies in Florida which offer many booklets, brochures, samples, audiovisual presentations, recordings, and other useful aids to yearbook layout. (HOD)

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YEARBOOK AND MAGAZINE LAYOUT

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English, Journalism

Written by Marlene E. Adams
for the
DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION
Dade County Public Schools
Miami, Florida
1972

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COURSE NUMBER

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COURSE TITLE: YEARBOOK AND MAGAZINE LAYOUT

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A study of theory and practice in page layout, photo cropping and editing, use of color and special effects, copy fitting and headline writing and fitting, and principles of typography. Current magazines are studied for trends in layout, and methods of adapting magazine layout to school publications are developed.

I. PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

A. Given a list of terms used in layout, the student will define the terms.

B. Given a completed layout, the student will label the components of the layout using appropriate terms.

C. Given several layouts from magazines or yearbooks, the student will discuss critically the artistic success of each layout.

D. Given examples of several different types of layouts, the student will identify each type.

E. Given a yearbook layout, the student will rearrange the components of the layout to improve it.

F. Given an uncropped picture, the student will crop the picture, explaining his procedure.

G. Given a cropped picture, the student will calculate the dimensions for an enlargement or a reduction of the picture.

H. Given blank layout paper and a ruler, the student will copy a double page spread from a yearbook, making a layout for the spread.

I. Given a magazine, the student, selecting a spread,will adapt it for a yearbook layout.

J. Given a magazine or yearbook, the student will identify several special effects used in printing it.

K. Given a number of photos, the student, selecting one for improvement with a special effect, will explain his evaluation.

L. Given the opportunity, the student will explain the relative costs and advantages of different special effects to a yearbook's budget.

M. Given a headline, the student will count the units in the headline.

N. Given a block of copy, the student will count the characters in the block.

O. Given a block of copy, the student will estimate the space such copy would occupy in a yearbook.

P. Given samples of different type faces for headlines and body copy, the student will evaluate each for legibility and appropriateness in a yearbook.

Q. Given several uncropped pictures, a block of copy, and a headline, the student will create a layout utilizing most of the pictures, accommodating the headline and copy, and following the rules of good layout.

II. COURSE CONTENT

A. Rationale

A yearbook consists of an attractive display of pictorial and verbal information. Through the careful and artistic arrangement of photographs, artwork, headlines, and copy, the yearbook will give evidence of journalistic training and will promote leadership. Skill in layout can be developed by making editors aware of the elements of layout, by exposing them to professional examples of layout in magazines, and by providing practice in the use and manipulation of these elements to achieve an effect of unity and art in their layout designs. Ideally, this course would precede the actual production of the school yearbook and would serve as a preparatory course for new staffers. However, the information in this course could also be combined with the first quinmester course in actual yearbook production. If the units within the course are converted into learning activity packages, they could be taught at any time during the course or given to new students who join the staff after the first quin. The course includes principles of yearbook/magazine layout and identification of several often-used styles of layout; cropping and proportioning (enlarging and reducing) of photos; methods of fitting type for copy blocks, captions, and headlines; the use of color and other special effects; and opportunity for practice in using these skills, terms, and procedures.

B. Range of subject matter

1. Theory of page layout

    a. Photographs
    b. Headlines
    c. Body copy
    d. Cutlines
    e. Air
    f. Styles

2. Photo cropping and proportioning

    a. Portraits
    b. Group shots
    c. Candids

3. Color and special effects

   a. Pictures
   b. Spot color
   c. Screens

4. Type fitting for copy and headlines

5. Typography

III. TEACHING STRATEGIES

A. Short lectures

Via lecture-demonstrations, the teacher may explain terms and identify the elements of layout: the margins, columns, gutter, double-page spread, copy, captions, headlines, and so on. The following material is an overview of the primary understandings necessary to the development of an attractive product.

1. Theory of page layout

"Layout" refers to the different elements (pictures, type, and white space) in books, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, and other printed items. Yearbook layout emphasizes photographs primarily, but includes information, identification, and headlines as well. There are many types of layout arrangements, but nearly all have the same basic principles.

a. Photographs are planned so that the more important or interesting pictures are featured, and others, if any, are subordinated. Usually the emphasis is achieved by size, though the use of color or shape can also draw attention to a picture.

b. Headlines are abbreviated sentences -- or sometimes, merely titles -- which announce the subject matter of the page or double page spread. They are set in larger type. The location of the headline is usually near the body copy, most often directly above it. The length of the headline is determined by the layout, and is written after the layout is designed so it is sure to fit. The size of type used is generally the same throughout the book; however, a smaller size type is often used for "sub-heads" and other minor headlines.

c. Body copy is the "story" or written matter on the page. Usually several paragraphs of copy are included on every double page spread. This is written in journalistic style, and often written after the layout is made to insure that it will be long (or short) enough.

Body copy is generally in the same size and style of type throughout a yearbook. The copy in the opening section or on special pages might be larger, while the type used in the index, the class section, and for club identification is generally smaller. The width of copy blocks is usually standardized throughout a book: for example, all copy might be set in lines three inches wide. Another effect that is often used in yearbooks is to set the copy so that one side is "ragged" or unjustified; this gives the effect of free verse, a rather "arty" look. Again, consistency is important: if most of the copy is in even, justified columns, then all of it should be.

d. Captions, or cutlines, contain information about photos. Usually they are set in a different style of type (boldface or italic) and often in a smaller size than the body copy. The usual location for captions is above or below the pictures they describe. Sometimes captions for a page or spread are all put into one copy block. These blocks are called "cluster captions." Each caption is then keyed to its picture numerically or with such expressions as "above left," etc. Many yearbooks eliminate captions on some or all of their candid photos. This makes layout easier (captions sometimes make a layout more difficult to accomplish) and cleaner (because little lines of type between every picture make layouts busy.) However, captions serve an important function: since a yearbook is primarily a reference book, it is useful to include as much information as possible for the reader. The names of all people in a photo and a description of the event or situation are considered essential by most yearbook judging services.

e. White space, or "air," is a layout element as much as are any of the above. Unlike newspapers, which generally fill up every bit of the page with type or pictures, leaving a margin only around the outside edges, magazines and yearbooks utilize white space to balance and contrast with other elements. White space is used for all exterior margins, and to separate elements from each other (interior margins).

f. Layout styles -- specific ways to design pages, like the mosaic, modular, Mondrian, formal-balance, or columnar method -- have seasons or eras of popularity. Each of the above methods produces layouts with a feeling of unity for a book, but each utilizes different approaches to focus, white space, and so on. The best source for current information about the specific styles that are "in" at any particular time is the yearbook printer's representative. The major publishing companies provide any brochures and samples of layout techniques for the use of yearbook staffs.

2. Photo cropping and proportioning

The photographs in a yearbook may be roughly divided into three classes: portraits, group pictures, and candid or informal pictures.

a. Portraits are usually produced professionally, and when they are, they are generally proportioned uniformly and cropped into vertical shapes, with only head and shoulders showing. Traditionally, portraits are printed using similar cropping, so the staff does not need to change anything on these pictures before sending them to the printer. However, they will usually be provided to the school larger than they are to appear in the book. In the layout, then, the pictures must be reduced in proportion to their original dimensions. A picture that is 3" x 5", for example, could be reduced proportionally to 1 1/2" x 2 1/2", or to any other proportional size. Special slide rules and proportioning wheels and other devices are provided by the printer to make this job a simple one.

b. Group pictures are portraits, in a sense, and are therefore cropped to include the subject -- that is, the faces and shoulders of the individuals -- with everything below shoulders or waist trimmed off, and distracting backgrounds minimized. Currently, many group pictures are being arranged in a casual manner with individuals grouped informally in a garden, up a stairway, under trees, and so on. In pictures like these, the backgrounds are part of the planned picture, and the full length of the individuals is generally planned to be part of the artistic composition. These pictures are

cropped to include whatever adds to the mood of the picture, but the individuals should still dominate: the more background that can be trimmed away, the larger the people will be in the yearbook, and that is important to these people.

c. Informals or candids can be cropped in many unusual ways to focus attention on the subject of the photo. A study of Look or Life magazine will show that often the forehead of an individual will be cropped out to draw attention to his expression or his work. Vertical pictures (pictures longer or higher than they are wide) are not as common as horizontals, and students should look for vertical possibilities in some of their horizontally-printed photos. Verticals are needed for interesting variety in layout, and often one minor element of a picture can be isolated and enlarged into such a vertical. Square pictures are another format useful for variety. Shapes other than rectangular (such as circular, football-shaped, and so on) are not in vogue at the present, and in any case are used exceedingly rarely for special emphasis. Sometimes the printer can "outline" a photo; that is, he can take the subject and eliminate the background so the subject is printed standing on the white page. This procedure is costly, and effective on a limited basis.

3. Color and special effects

A glance through recent local yearbooks will prove the popularity of many special-effect printing techniques. Most of these techniques cost extra money, and it is essential that the staff know where and to what extent each technique is appropriate.

a. Colored pictures are an obviously attractive feature in many yearbooks. Such pictures are the most expensive of all common printing effects, however. They require four separate printing plates and four printing runs with four colors of ink. In addition, they require an original color photo which in itself can be costly to set up and take. In laying out a section which will have color photos in it, the staff

should know that the cost factor is decreased for successive color pictures on the same page or printing flat. This fact is so because it costs the printer little more to print additional pictures in color at the same time that he is printing one. For this reason, the location of color must be planned with the printer so that the most economical arrangement is made.

b. "Spot color" is the term used when an ink other than black is used on a page for any reason. This is done in "tint blocks," which are areas of solid or screened color printed behind pictures, between pictures, behind type areas, or sometimes in other ways. Spot color is also used in "duotone" photos, which are black-and-white pictures which are overprinted with the same picture in a colored ink, such as green or blue. Sometimes type or headlines are set in colored ink rather than black. The same planning that is used in four-color process must be used to plan spot color, which, too, requires separate printing plates and press runs. Spot color is less expensive than four-color, but it is still an item that must be budgeted.

c. Special screens are sometimes used to get unusual effects with black-and-white photographs. These screens are used instead of the tiny-dot type of halftone screen, and can make a picture look like an etching, a poster, a series of fine lines or concentric circles, etc. The printer's representative will have samples of available screens and the different effects possible with them.

4. Type fitting for copy and headlines

In order to be sure that a headline will fit the space planned for it in the layout, editors must know exactly how many units of type can be accommodated in that space, and then must count their headline to see that it does not exceed that number of units. A headline that is too long or too short can make a layout look sloppy, and often cannot be printed at all, causing the staff expense when they have to rewrite it while correcting proofs of the page. Headlines are usually set in such large type

that the letters must be counted in terms of "units," because some letters are wider than others. The unit values for letters are given in all basic journalism texts and are provided by most printers.

Because body copy is printed in smaller type, counting by units is not necessary. Often a word-count method is used, but the most accurate method is one in which every character and space is counted. This is called the "character-count" method. Every type style and size has a different character count; that is, every style will differ from others in the exact number of letters that will fit in a given line length. Again, the printer can provide accurate counts for the type styles to be used in the book. If body copy is not counted, the editor may write too much or too little copy, making the layout sloppy and causing correction costs later.

5. Typography

The selection of type faces for the yearbook depends on good taste and an understanding of the effect the book is trying to achieve. First of all, the type must be legible -- in other words, it should not be physically fatiguing to the eye to read in quantity. Scripts, italics, and text types (old English) are not as legible as the more commonly used (roman and sans serif type face.) However, most printers offer a wide variety of type styles--and most are easily read. A second consideration is effect; some type styles are traditional-looking, and others are quite modern-looking. Some are delicate and feminine, while others are bold and overpowering. Since the entire book is generally printed in one type style, care must be taken that the type style chosen will be appropriate for many uses. A third consideration is harmony. Headline type and body type are often not in the same "family" of type, but they should look well together, and suggest a similar "mood."

B. Projects and writing assignments

This course is basically a laboratory for new yearbook staffers to learn and practice layout techniques. Therefore, most of the course must be involved with

student production of layouts and student practice in the skills needed to make layouts. Projects and assignments will include copying pages from existing yearbooks onto layout paper; improving such layouts; adapting magazine layouts for yearbook use; cropping photos to area of interest; proportioning photos to fit into layouts; designing layouts which will accommodate pictures that have been proportioned; counting headlines by units; counting copy by characters; laying out copy and headline areas which will accommodate previously written copy and headlines; specifying different kinds of special effects. In addition, the teacher may assign writing assignments in which students explain why copyfitting is necessary, why cropping a picture can make it more interesting, or why a particular magazine or yearbook has good or bad layouts.

C. Discussions

Discussion is useful when evaluating layouts either in magazines and yearbooks or in student-produced assignments. It can be used to determine the best cropping of a picture. Since special effects are used in limited ways in a yearbook, students should discuss the most interesting and economical ways for their book to include any such effects.

D. Resource personnel

The publisher's representative is the most easily available, well-trained person to supplement instruction covered in this unit. The photographer contracted to take senior portraits often has personnel who can explain photo cropping to a class. Local journalists and advertising layout people may have ideas for the staff, but their ideas may not instantly translate themselves to yearbook technique.

E. Field trips

Local publishers of magazines and yearbooks might permit tours of the pasteup and printing areas in their plants. Such tours can show students why their layouts must be executed in a way that the printer's employees can easily interpret.

IV. LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

A. Learning the language of layout

1. Listen to lecture/demonstration on layout terms.
2. Study printed lists of layout definitions.
3. Read textbook chapters on layout, if any.
4. Look at a completed layout; identify the parts of the layout.
5. Look at a magazine spread; identify the parts of the layout.

B. Learning the theories or types of layouts

1. Listen to lecture/demonstration which illustrates different types of layout.
2. Look through other yearbooks; identify the type of layout used.
3. Look at magazines (Look, Life, etc.); identify type of layout used.
4. Evaluate different types of layout in a discussion; determine which layouts seem most attractive and which seem easiest to execute and to adapt to the various needs of the school's yearbook.

C. Cropping and proportioning photos

1. Study photos printed in yearbooks and magazines to see if the editors trimmed uninteresting and distracting elements from the pictures.
2. Study photos provided by the photographer which have not been cropped to determine where they should be cropped.
3. Listen to lecture/demonstration on methods of cropping photos.
4. Use actual photos; make crop marks on photo using method requested by printer or teacher.
5. Calculate the width of a printed photo if the cropped size is now 6" x 8" and the height is to be, when printed, 3"; 12"; 7"; 5".

6. Presume a layout calls for a photo to be 9" x 12"; find a photo and crop it proportionally so it can be enlarged to that size. Try this approach for other hypothetical sizes.

7. Redesign a layout from a yearbook by enlarging, reducing, and recropping photos in order to improve the layout. (Presume the copy and headlines to occupy the same amount of space they use in the original layout.)

D. Learning to recognize and use special effects

1. Look through magazines and yearbooks to find photos which use special effects; discuss the value of such effects.

2. Listen to lecture/demonstration on the types of special effects, the planning necessary for their use, and the cost to the yearbook for each effect.

3. Listen to a short lecture on printing flats, photo screening at the printer's, use of inks, and other items which affect the use of special effects.

4. Discuss the disadvantages of extra-cost special effects versus the added artistic values which they provide.

5. Find photos which would be effective with special screen treatments or with spot color added as a duotone or tint block. Design a layout in which these pictures are featured. Write clear specifications or instructions on the layout which the printer could follow to achieve the effect intended.

6. Fold a large sheet of paper into eight sections to represent an eight-page standard printing flat. Roughly plan a sixteen page section (using both sides of the paper) to utilize four-color or spot color on one printing flat (one side of the large paper.)

E. Fitting type for headlines and copy areas

1. Listen to a lecture/demonstration on the unit method of counting headlines.

2. Practice counting units on headlines provided by the teacher.

3. Find headlines of different type sizes and styles in magazines and yearbooks. Count the number of units in a given length of each (4 inches, for example) to compare the effect of different sizes and styles on the number of units accommodated by each.

4. Count fifteen units in each sample headline used in #3 and compare the length of each headline at fifteen units.

5. Listen to lecture on character counting---how and why it is done.

6. Find a block of copy in a magazine or yearbook. Count the number of lines of type. Count the characters in several lines of type to determine an average number of characters in a line. Measure the length of the line in picas. Calculate how many lines would be needed if each line were 1 inch longer; 1 inch shorter. Calculate how much vertical space would be occupied by the new copy blocks. This should be done, step by step, by the entire class, if possible, at least at first.

7. Discuss in class what would happen if headlines and copy blocks were not counted carefully to fit the layout.

8. Discuss in class the advantages and disadvantages of writing headlines and copy first, and then design a layout to accommodate them.

F. Learning the principles of typography

1. Listen to a lecture/demonstration on typography terms (point system of measuring, serifs, legibility, harmony, and so on.)

2. Find type faces in magazines which are italic, roman, sans serif, text, script, bold, condensed, novelty, etc. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of several of these faces for yearbook use.

3. Measure headline types from top of a capital letter to bottom of a descending letter (y, g, p) with a pica stick (special ruler) to determine point size of types.

4. Discuss effect of type sizes on layouts, reader interest, readability.

5. Listen to lecture/discussion on specifying type for the printer.

6. Indicate copy and headlines on a layout and specify according to instructions of printer or teacher.

IV. STUDENT RESOURCES

A. State-adopted textbooks

1. Hartman, William. Journalism. River Forest, Illinois: Laidlaw Brothers, 1968.

2. Mulligan, John and Dan D'Amelio. Experiences in Journalism. Atlanta: Lyons and Carnahan, Inc., 1956.

B. The following magazines are useful for studying layout and typography. Current and recent issues will reflect new trends in these areas, many of which are adaptable to yearbooks.

1. Life

2. Look

3. McCall's

4. Seventeen

5. Esquire

6. Playboy

7. TV Guide

8. Psychology Today

9. Vogue

C. The following yearbook printing companies are among those doing business in Florida. They offer many booklets, brochures, samples, audio-visual presentations, recordings, and other useful aids in yearbook layout.

1. American Yearbook Company, Hannibal, Missouri

2. Keys Printing Company, c/o Jack Williams Company, Gainesville, Florida

3. Delmar Publishing Company, Charlotte, North Carolina

4. Paragon Press, c/o Jack Williams Company, Gainesville, Florida

5. Taylor Publishing Company, Hollywood, Florida, or Dallas, Texas

6. Designers Press, Orlando, Florida

7. Crown Publishing Company, Orland, Florida

V. TEACHER RESOURCES

See STUDENT RESOURCES: A., B., C.